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SUBJECT: VISIT OF FORMER PRESIDENT CLINTON AND BILL AND MELINDA GATES  
TO LESOTHO

1. On 12 July 2006, Former U.S. President William Jefferson Clinton visited Mafeteng, Lesotho, in connection with his AIDS foundation. The Embassy provided vehicle and security support (as requested by USSS), assistance with motorcade and liaison with the GOL. Mr. William Gates and Mrs. Melinda Gates, representing their charitable foundation, accompanied Mr. Clinton. They greeted the Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Health and Social Welfare, Ambassador Perry, health care officials, and patients. A brief press event was held by the visitors with international and local press.

2. President George Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which was well underway in Lesotho before the Clinton Foundation arrived, has played a major role in sensitizing the leadership of Lesotho and coordinating the many American organizations working in the HIV/AIDS arena. The Clinton visit highlighted the increasing international interest in and example set by Lesotho. This leadership is reflected in the "Know Your Status" campaign, which aims to test all Basotho twelve years and up for their HIV status before the end of 2007. Lesotho's Know Your Status campaign is reported to be the first nation-wide testing response to the HIV epidemic and may become a model for other countries that face or may face the HIV epidemic. Large scale human resources have to become available to carry out this enormous task.

3. During the visit, the GOL reported that that Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART) adherence rate in Lesotho is eighty-nine percent. ART adherence measures the number of patients who take their medication in the right dosage on time more than eighty percent of the time. For ARTs to be effective they must be taken in accordance with prescription eighty percent of the time. During a press Q and A, Mr. Clinton said these statistics negate the theory that people in developing nations cannot and will not take medication in accordance with prescriptions. He said his foundation would help provide CD4 count machines. (Note: The USG through CDC and DOD has contributed several in country now.) To date, with adherence counselors and the provision of child formula, 7,000 Basotho have received ARTs and are living longer lives, according to a local physician. The Clinton Foundation hopes to encourage the Gates Foundation to become involved in Lesotho.

4. International press at the event were CNN, NBC, MTV, the New York Times, The New Yorker, Fortune, the Financial Times, the Guardian, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, The Washington Post, The Star and Business Day. Mr. Clinton, Mr. Gates and Mrs. Gates gave an extended interview to NBC. Local media present included Lesotho Television.

5. Local police and security were helpful, provided escorts and

worked closely with Secret Service Agents Chris Sigalos, Karen Gerstbrein and Jeff Golaszweski. Post would like to commend the efficiency and flexibility of these agents. Post would also like to thank Vice-Consul Elizabeth Schlachter, TDY from Johannesburg, for her work covering consular services during the visit and Embassy Pretoria for its supportive role.

PERRY